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ABSTRACT

The itinerant secondary remedial resource teacher service, designed to identify and help isolated country students in Queensland who are experiencing learning difficulties and to assist teachers in classrooms, program development, and resource strategy for exceptional learners, was evaluated seven months after project initiation in 1979. Data for evaluation were obtained by visitation at four participating schools; observation of the one remedial resource teacher for two sessions on one afternoon; interviews and discussions with four school principals, several classroom teachers, the remedial/resource teacher and state and Catholic educators; and document analysis. At the four schools in the area, 46 of 341 students were assisted by the remedial/resource teacher. The teacher's time was spent 40% with students, 40% with classroom teachers and principals, and 20% alone doing preparation and reading during the week spent at each school during the four-week cycle. Re-testing of students was incomplete when the report was written; however, 7 students showed reading age gains of 2 to 18 months. Students and parents were generally positive about the program; teachers and principals reported childrens' motivation, confidence and attitudes improved. It was suggested the service be continued and extended to other Queensland Priority Country Areas. (AW)

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PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA PROGRAM EVALUATION SERIES: REPORT NO. 5

The Itinerant Secondary Remedial/Resource Teacher Service in Central Queensland

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February 1980

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Report

1.1 This report – an investigation and evaluation of the itinerant secondary remedial/resource teacher service in the Central Priority Country Area – is one in the series of formal evaluation reports being written in response to the State Committee (P.C.A.P.) decision to evaluate the various projects currently in operation under its auspices and funded by the Schools Commission. The purpose of the survey and report was to describe the particular nature of the service, its effectiveness and the various activities of the itinerant remedial/resource teacher. These programs cannot be described simply in terms of the four delivery centres. Although isolated, they are not homogeneous and are characterised by specific as well as variable situational factors affecting the service. The survey also sought to discover any particular problems or constraints affecting the service and to make recommendations to the Joint Committee concerning service provision and delivery in the light of the findings of the survey.

Remedial and Resource Teachers (Queensland)

1.2 The remedial teacher in the Queensland setting is concerned with helping primary school children referred by primary guidance officers. The teacher is based at one particular school and serves the children from that school and surrounding schools either in small groups or individual withdrawal situations. Usually, two 1½ hour sessions are conducted each week. Emphasis is on overcoming reading problems and, to a lesser extent, problems in mathematics.

The resource teacher (primary) usually services one school but may also service other nearby schools. Her role is a more flexible one than that of the remedial teacher. She may assist some children in a withdrawal situation; she may assist others in the classroom situation through team teaching, individual and/or group work. She acts as a resource person for the teacher concerning programs, strategies and resource materials. She is concerned with a wide range of general and specific educational difficulties.

The role and duties of the resource teacher (secondary) are described in Chapter 2.

Data Sources

1.3 Data for this report were obtained by the writer visiting the four schools, observing the teacher in action for two sessions on one afternoon at Dysart; by unstructured interviews with each of the four school principals, and with a number of classroom teachers at Alpha, Clermont and Dysart; by several interviews and discussions with the remedial/resource teacher herself; by discussions with professional staff at the State Regional Education Office, and the Diocesan Catholic Education Office; and by a study of the relevant files in these offices as well as in the Brisbane Office of the State Committee (P.C.A.P.).

Queensland Priority Country Areas

1.4 One area in central Queensland and another area in the south-west of the State were declared priority country areas by the Commonwealth Minister for Education in terms of sub-section 4(4) of *The States Grants (Schools Assistance) Act,* 1976,wherein it is stated that:

> Where–
> (a) the students, or a substantial number of the students, receiving primary education or secondary education in a country area of a State are members of a community that is, for geographic, social, economic or cultural reasons, or for similar reasons, of such a kind that the capacity of the students to take advantage of educational opportunities ordinarily available at schools in the State is below average;
> (b) the State Education Minister for the State informs the Commonwealth Education Minister of that fact; and
> (c) the Commonwealth Education Minister is of the opinion that the area should, for any of the reasons referred to in paragraph (a), be treated as a disadvantaged country area for the purposes of this Act,
> the Commonwealth Education Minister may declare the area to be a disadvantaged country area for the purposes of this Act.

Educational Disadvantage

1.5 The Schools Commission in its 1976 report[1]discussed a variety of factors which interact to produce the complex of variables associated with educational disadvantage. Such factors include socio-economic ones; a locational factor affecting availability of alternative schooling for children of parents able and anxious to provide it; lower expectations held by some parents, students, and the community; a comparatively lower level of educational services provision; and 'geographic isolation of both the family and the school from a variety of cultural and social influences and from resources and opportunities available to urban families with similar levels of income and educational background'.[2]

Brief Description of the Central Queensland Priority Country Area

1.6 The Central Queensland Priority Country Area – as well as that of the South-West – proclaimed by the Minister, is characterised by many of the criteria considered by the Schools Commission as indicative of educational disadvantage. The area declared in Central Queensland consists of nine shires – Bauhinia, Belyando, Broadsound, Duaringa, Emerald, Jericho, Nebo, Peak Downs and Tambo. For administrative purposes the Tambo Shire has been incorporated in the South-West Priority Country Area to which it is more closely linked in terms of access and services. Under the auspices of the State Committee, the Central Queensland Priority Country Area Committee (Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee) initiates, organises, co-ordinates and administers the programs provided in the remaining eight shires in Central Queensland. See Figure 1.

Population and Extent

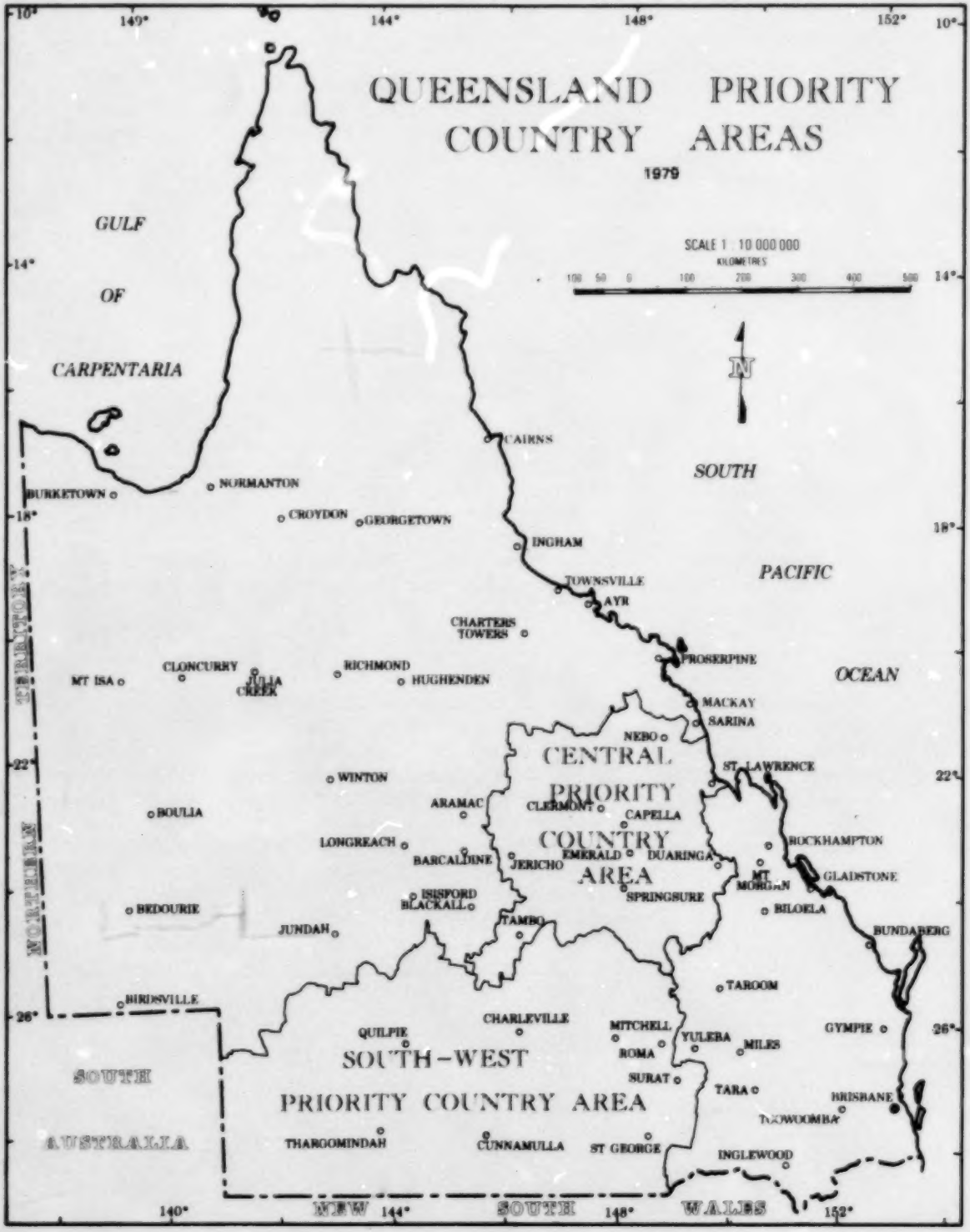
1.7 The area defined in terms of the eight shires contains 150 132 square kilometres (about 8.7 per cent of the area of the State) with a population estimate of 31 900 (1.5 per cent of the Queensland population). In terms of size and population the region is relatively small. In recent years, however, there has been a steady continuing growth in population resulting from (a) the subdivision of large land holdings and the brigalow lands development scheme, both leading to expansion in the pastoral and agricultural industries; and (b) the development of a very large coal exporting industry resulting in the establishment of new towns – e.g. Blackwater, population 4600; Moranbah, population 4000; Dysart, population 3000. Older established service centres include Springsure (population 800), Clermont (population 1650), Emerald (population 3200), Alpha (population 563).

Educational Provision (Secondary)

1.8 Provision for secondary education in the area was made with State high schools at Blackwater, Emerald, and Moranbah; and with State secondary departments attached to primary schools at Alpha, Clermont, Dysart and Springsure. See Figure 2. The Catholic education system does not provide any secondary facilities in the area. Of the four State secondary departments, Dysart is the only one that caters for students to Year 12. The town of Dysart did not exist until 1973. It was established to accommodate the married personnel from the several coal mines being developed in the area. Although built specifically to service the mining operations, it is a public town administered by the Broadsound Shire Council.

1.9 Enrolments in the secondary departments are set out in Table 1.

FIGURE 1


QUEENSLAND PRIORITY COUNTRY AREAS
1979
SCALE 1 : 10 000 000
KILOMETRES
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
N
GULF OF CARPENTARIA
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
NORTHERN TERRITORY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
CENTRAL PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
SOUTH-WEST PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
CAIRNS
NORMANTON
BURKETOWN
CROYDON
GEORGETOWN
INGHAM
TOWNSVILLE
AYR
CHARTERS TOWERS
PROSERPINE
MACKAY
SARINA
NEBO
ST LAWRENCE
CLONCURRY
MT ISA
JULIA CREEK
RICHMOND
HUGHENDEN
WINTON
BOULIA
ARAMAC
CLERMONT
CAPELLA
LONGREACH
BARCALDINE
JERICHO
EMERALD
DUARINGA
ROCKHAMPTON
MT MORGAN
GLADSTONE
SPRINGSURE
ISISFORD
BLACKALL
BIDDOURIE
BILOELA
JUNDAH
TAMBO
BUNDABERG
TAROOM
BIRDSVILLE
CHARLEVILLE
MITCHELL
YULEBA
MILES
GYMPIE
QUILPIE
ROMA
SURAT
TARA
BRISBANE
TOWOOMBA
THARGOMINDAH
CUNNAMULLA
ST GEORGE
INGLEWOOD
10°
14°
18°
22°
26°
140°
144°
148°
152°

10

Table 1: Total School Enrolment (by Years) in Secondary Departments – Central Queensland Priority Country Area – June 1979

Centre	Secondary Enrolment by Year					Total
	8	9	10	11	12	
Alpha	17	11	12	–	–	40
Clermont	29	28	34	–	–	91
Dysart	48	60	39	5	3	155
Springsure	18	18	19	–	–	55
Total	112	117	104	5	3	341

Need For a Remedial/Resource Teacher

1.10 The provision of adequate secondary services in centres with small enrolments is a difficult commitment. The quality of the educational service provided is frequently seriously limited by rapid turnover of teaching staff who are often young and inexperienced and sometimes required to teach in subject areas for which they were not specifically trained. In some cases too, the support and assistance available to these teachers from the principal who is a highly skilled primary teacher and administrator are limited in the secondary area and inadequate to meet the teachers' total needs. Specialist help in subject areas and in remediation, for example, which are a feature of the large rural and urban high schools,cannot be provided. The small rural high school and the primary school with the secondary department attached frequently have great difficulty in developing appropriate educational programs for children with special needs. Students themselves are further disadvantaged by the restricted subject choices that are available and by their own limited experiential background.

1.11 The Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee considered there was the need for an itinerant secondary remedial/resource teacher to service the four secondary departments of Alpha, Clermont, Dysart and Springsure to ameliorate some of the problems and difficulties mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The Committee saw the role of such a teacher as including the identification and assistance of students who were experiencing learning difficulties, and assisting teachers in a variety of ways as a resource teacher, in the classroom, in program development, in recommending resources to assist the exceptional learner. In short, the teacher's role was to be a dual one, that of a remedial and a resource teacher.

1.12 The service was introduced at the beginning of the 1979 school year, and had been in operation for about seven months at the time of this report.

FIGURE 2

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND
PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
June 1980
TOTAL AREA 151 000 km²
KEY
BOUNDARY OF PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
MAJOR ROUTES WITH DISTANCES BETWEEN CENTRES IN KILOMETRES
SCALE 1 : 3 200 000
KILOMETRES
146°00'
148°00'
150°00'
20°00'
22°00'
24°00'
SOUTH
PACIFIC
OCEAN
MACKAY
SARINA
CHARTERS TOWERS
NEBO
MORANBAH
ST LAWRENCE
DYSART
CLERMONT
CAPELLA
BARCALDINE
ALPHA
EMERALD
COMET
BLACKWATER
ROCKHAMPTON
DINGO
DUARINGA
SPRINGSURE
BLACKALL
ROLLESTON
TAMBO
CHARLEVILLE
INJUNE
375
82
104
163
53
181
108
143
169
40
36
48
39
113
68
119
167
71
246

CHAPTER 2

THE RESOURCE TEACHER – CONCEPT AND CONTEXT

The Concept

2.1 Dunn (1968) proposed the concept of resource teaching and suggested the following model:

> 'It is proposed that a second echelon of special educators be itinerant of resource teachers . . . the key role of the resource room and itinerant clinical educators would be to develop instructional materials and lessons for implementing the prescription found effective for the child, and to consult and work with the other educators who serve the child. Thus, the job of special educators would be to work as members of the school's instructional teams and to focus on children with mild to moderate school learning problems.'[4]

Secondary Resource Teachers

2.2 The introduction of the first resource teachers to secondary schools in Queensland occurred in 1975. The Director of Secondary Education in the Department of Education at that time perceived the role and duties of resource teachers to include the following:

1. The resource teacher is not to be attached to any subject department in the school; they are to work under the direction of the principal.
2. The resource teacher is to act in a consultative capacity to subject masters and classroom teachers in all departments, with regard to educational diagnosis and teaching method and strategy to individualise instruction.
3. The resource teacher should not normally be timetabled, but if so, only for a minimum period of time.
4. The resource teacher could act as a member of a teaching team if the situation warranted it, and in a withdrawal situation as a remedial teacher where the situation demanded it.
5. There should be frequent consultation with the guidance officer, especially on testing procedures. The resource teacher should act closely in liaison with the guidance officer, and each must always have a clear understanding of his respective role. There should also be frequent consultation with teacher-librarians and subject masters on material requirements for effective work.
6. The resource teacher will need to have access to books and audio-visual material in order to build up a viable resource centre.

7. If possible, the resource teacher should have the sole use of a room.
8. The resource teacher must serve the whole school and not just one department of the school.

The P.C.A.P. Remedial/Resource Teacher Model

2.3 The model in 2.2 makes provision for those students who were in need of intensive support and assistance in a remedial-withdrawal situation. The remedial and resource teaching models were not viewed as being dichotomous. This model was the one adopted by the Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee for its itinerant remedial/resource teacher, to service the four secondary departments in the area. The focus of the service was to be on the student in the classroom setting, with support and assistance to students and teachers in that setting. Furthermore, it was envisaged that support would also be given to other learning-disabled secondary correspondence students on request.

The Appointee

2.4 The teacher appointed as the itinerant remedial-resource teacher was, immediately prior to appointment, one of the two teachers serving with the mobile classroom, so she was well acquainted with the area itself, and well-known in the area to many people as well as to a number of colleagues. She was not, as Dunn proposed, a 'special educator' but was a trained secondary teacher highly motivated to help children with learning difficulties, a graduate in Arts who had taught in a number of State secondary schools in Queensland, as well as having had some overseas teaching experience. She had successfully completed the first semester of the Secondary Resource Teacher Course* offered by the Kelvin Grove College of Advanced Education which leads to an award at the post-graduate diploma level.

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* This course is offered initially by a full-time one-semester program with heavy concentration on workshops and in-school experience and later by a minimum of two part-time semesters offered externally.

CHAPTER 3

THE PLAN AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Schools Advised of Service

3.1 In the first week of the 1979 school year the four secondary departments at Alpha, Clermont, Dysart and Springsure were informed by circular letter from the Regional Director of Education, Central Region, who is also Chairman of the Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee, of the commencement of the itinerant remedial/resource teacher service to the four centres and that 'support may also be given to other learning-disabled secondary correspondence students on request'.

Role of the Itinerant Remedial/Resource Teacher

3.2 The role statement which accompanied the circular letter is cited below:

> 'The visiting remedial teacher provides a support service to classroom teachers with regard to programming for children with major educational problems. During visits, which are essentially consultative in nature, the remedial teacher may:
> (a) appraise the achievements of children referred by teachers through the principal of the school;
> (b) assist teachers in planning appropriate programs for individual children or small groups;
> (c) take part in a teaching team where this is feasible;
> (d) demonstrate the teaching of certain skills where requested;
> (e) provide a follow-up consultant service in relation to remedial programs suggested for pupils by guidance officers; and
> (f) refer to the regional guidance officer children who require in-depth psychological testing.
>
> The visiting remedial teacher cannot undertake to withdraw children for remedial teaching on a sessional basis: nor to provide detailed individual remedial programs'.

3.3 It was further decided that professionally the teacher would consult and liaise with the Regional Director of Education and senior professional officers – inspectors of schools (Secondary), and the Regional Guidance Officer attached to the Central Region; and that administratively she would be under the direction of the Co-ordinator, P.C.A.P., who worked from the Diocesan Catholic Education Office. Her headquarters were to be at Clermont.

Identification, Diagnosis and Referral

3.4 During the four-week period – 5 February to 2 March 1979 – the remedial/resource teacher spent one full week in each of the four selected secondary departments. During the initial visit she undertook the following:

(a) Discussion with the principal and class teachers, together with a study of individual student record cards to identify students at risk.
(b) Administration of the following testing program:
  (i) Schonell SIA Spelling Test (Group Test) to all Year 8 students and to Year 9 students at teacher's request;
  (ii) St Lucia Graded Word Recognition Test (individual) to children considered to be at risk; and
  (iii) The Gapadol Reading Comprehension Test (group) to all Year 8 students and any others considered at risk.
(c) Examination and assessment of the school's resources suitable for exceptional learners as a basis for future planning.
(d) Discussion by the remedial/resource teacher with the principal and staff to consider her findings from the testing program, and her survey of the school's resources with a view to determining future planning, activities and the operational role in the school of the remedial/resource teacher.

3.5 As a result of the administration of the testing program (N=109) and discussion with the principals and teachers, it was discovered that about 30 per cent of students (14 out of 44) at Clermont and Springsure, and about 25 per cent (16 out of 65) at Alpha and Dysart warranted the support and assistance of the resource teacher.

Different Centres – Different Needs

3.6 The needs in each of the four centres as perceived by the remedial/resource teacher, as a result of her survey and knowledge of the area, contained elements that were different in different centres. Clermont, Alpha and Springsure date as service centres from last century, while Dysart, as a town, is only six years old and the school had grown in enrolment to 762 in the primary school and 155 in the secondary department at the beginning of second term 1979. Such rapid growth brings concern and problems which are not features of the other three schools. Dysart's population as estimated by the mining company in terms of its developmental program would be about 4000 people by late 1979. Alpha and Springsure are both much smaller centres than either Clermont and Dysart, and the teachers had greater needs in terms of assistance, support and direction. At Clermont and Dysart there were greater opportunities for staff interaction, and for incidental in-service assistance from more experienced staff members. Alpha and Springsure had great need for a visiting teacher who would provide classroom help and offer advice, in the areas of her competencies, in the preparation of teaching units and so on. The students at Alpha and Springsure are more isolated than those at Clermont and Dysart and have need for programs providing for social interaction outside their own home towns.

Proposed Plan

3.7 At the conclusion of the survey of needs and assessment of students, and following discussions with each school's teaching staff, the findings were further considered by the State Education Department's Regional Guidance Officer, and the Diocesan Supervisor for Special Education, Catholic Education Office, both of whom are members of the P.C.A.P. Committee; and a recommendation was made to the Committee that the service be implemented: The proposal, outlining the details of the survey and findings, was then submitted to the State Committee and approved.

3.8 The service was to operate as follows:

(a) A one-week period was to be spent by the remedial/resource teacher in each of the four schools, Alpha, Clermont, Dysart and Springsure on a rotational basis.
(b) The remedial/resource teacher will work with those children to be found 'at risk', and will be flexible when more children are found to be 'at risk'.
(c) The remedial/resource teacher will advise teachers as to the program best suited for children's needs.
(d) The remedial/resource teacher will assist teachers in using resources already available at the school.
(e) The remedial/resource teacher will also be involved in co-operative teaching and teacher consultation.
(f) The remedial/resource teacher will re-test (using Gapadol) those 'at risk' students to determine whether or not gains have been made. This is to be done at the completion of Term 2. Any shorter period would not be advisable.

3.9 Prior to the introduction of the programs at each school, a letter was sent to the parents of each child who was a candidate for admission to the program, inviting them to the school for a personal meeting and discussion with the remedial/resource teacher. An invitation was extended to all parents at Springsure to attend a special meeting so that the remedial/resource teacher could explain her role, and the proposed program, and obtain parents' views and ideas on ways to assist their own children at home. At Clermont and Alpha the remedial/resource teacher attended Parents and Citizens Association meetings for the same purpose. A detailed letter was sent to the Parents and Citizens Association at Dysart by the remedial/resource teacher explaining her role, the proposed programs, and seeking funding for the purchase of additional resources. In addition all teachers in the school were invited by the remedial/resource teacher to meet with her to discuss the purchase of resource material in English and mathematics, and other subject areas suitable for upper primary/lower secondary student and teacher use. Subsequently an approach was made to the Parents and Citizens Association for funds for the purchase of resource material.

3.10 The teacher also spoke with the children. Her approach was simple, direct and realistic. Briefly, she informed the children individually that a problem existed, that ways would be found to deal with the problem and to overcome it. The meeting also assisted in discovering the children's interests, and what would motivate them – essential information for planning appropriate individual programs.

CHAPTER 4

THE SERVICE

General Aims

4.1 The itinerant remedial/resource teacher established three general goals to be achieved in each school within the terms of her role statement prepared by the Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee. The goals she sought to achieve were:

(a) that teachers would develop a greater awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of all students, particularly those with special needs;
(b) that teachers would consequently become more highly motivated to develop stimulating work programs for all students to meet their individual needs; and
(c) that classroom teachers would come to assume responsibility for exceptional learners and would accordingly adapt their teaching programs to meet the needs of such students.

4.2 However, as mentioned previously (para. 3.6) the remedial/resource teacher was also very much aware of the specific environment of each school and of the significant contribution made by environmental factors within that context to the particular difficulties being experienced by students and exhibited by them. Consequently, somewhat different approaches were indicated and adopted by the teacher to meet the particular needs within the context of each school.

Strategies Employed

4.3 A diagnostic-prescriptive approach was employed by the teacher to bring about improved educational experiences for students and to meet particular school and/or exceptional learners' needs. These are summarised without reference to any particular school.

(a) Year 8:

(i) Assistance was provided in two smaller centres to teachers to develop intra- and inter-school functions and *to improve communication and social inter-action.*

(ii) Assistance was given to teachers of a *Year 8 gifted student* in the development of challenging work programs and the selection of stimulating resources. Parental support was also enlisted.

(iii) With a *remedial reading* group of four students, assistance was given to Year 8 teachers and parental co-operation was sought in implementing individual programs. Additional resources for programs were funded by the Parents and Citizens Association.

(iv) In an *extra English class* with a group of four students, she acted as consultant to principal and teacher. Individualised programs were embodied in a folder of worksheets. The student contract technique was employed.

(v) In dealing with *slow-learners* – mathematics, English, history – she assisted colleagues in the development of graded programs to meet the needs of three broad ability levels and individual needs. Learning games, worksheets and oral activities individually and in groups were utilised. Parent co-operation was enlisted.

Individualised work contracts and short tests with initial high success rate are used. Some children were withdrawn for special intensive assistance.

(b) Year 9:

(i) A number of ability groups were set up for *slow-learners*. Low achievers were given the opportunity to achieve and students came together one a week with the remedial/resource teacher for 'mutual aid' group work. Some students were withdrawn for intensive remedial work.

(ii) Classroom teachers were assisted in individualising programs for *remedial English*. Parental support and co-operation were requested and frequent testing initially indicated a high rate of achievement.

(c) Year 10:

(i) Assistance was given to the class teacher, who was a first-year and not trained in the social sciences area, in planning and developing units of work for *citizenship education*. Students were motivated through an activity approach.

(ii) *Slow-learners* were given a special library program for students with very low reading age; programs were developed and intensive teaching was undertaken in areas of functional numeracy and literacy; a 'terminating' English class based on learning/interest needs of students was established; and teachers were assisted with work experience programs.

(d) A *socially maladjusted student* was helped by working with the teachers and the student. After consultation with the parents the informal contract system was used.

(e) Through co-operation with teachers and students, *culturally disadvantaged students* were helped by means of drama, simulation games, poetry and short stories.

4.4 A summary of the number of children being assisted in each centre is set out below. Numbers in brackets are school enrolments in that Year.

Table 2: Number of Children being Assisted by the Remedial/Resource Teacher in Four Centres, Central Queensland

Centre	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Alpha	4 (17)	– (11)	– (12)	– (–)	– (–)	4 (40)
Clermont	9 (29)	9 (28)	– (34)	– (–)	– (–)	18 (91)
Dysart	8 (48)	8 (60)	2 (39)	– (5)	– (3)	18 (155)
Springsure	4 (18)	2 (18)	– (19)	– (–)	– (–)	6 (55)
Total	25 (112)	19 (117)	2 (104)	– (5)	– (3)	46 (341)

Individual Programs

4.6 Where necessary, individual programs for selected students were developed and prepared by the resource teacher following diagnosis and discussion with the principal and teachers. These programs were implemented with the support and assistance of the classroom teacher and in some cases with additional help from parents. Individual folders were used, and associated with the programs was a timetable so that students (and the classroom teacher) knew what was expected of them. The folders and organised programs further ensured that the classroom teacher had a prepared program for implementation between visits of the remedial/resource teacher. In this way students always had work available and could see their achievement and progress. Moreover, teachers knew what children were supposed to be doing and were obliged to assist with the programs when the remedial/resource teacher was visiting another school on her itinerary. It soon became evident that short tests were needed to allow students to experience success early in the program, and to keep a record of results, and once this need was recognised tests were incorporated in the program.

Activities

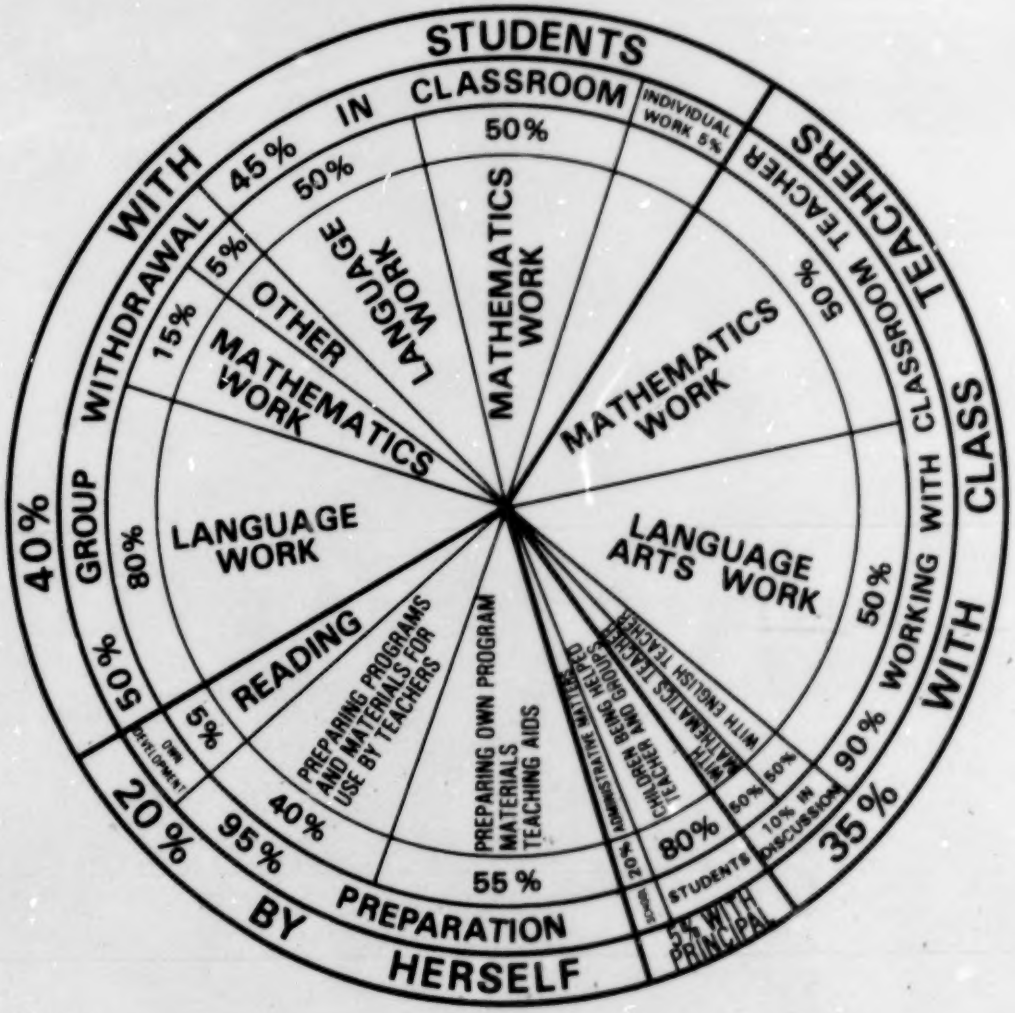
4.7 In Table 3 are listed the various activities which are a feature of the remedial/resource teacher's work and her own estimation of the time devoted to each on a 5-point scale. Column 1 records the estimate of time spent, and column 2 the time the remedial/resource teacher would like to devote to the activity.

Table 3: Remedial/Resource Teacher's Estimate of Time Spent in Various Activities
5 = a great deal of the time; 4= a large amount of the time; 3= some of the time; 2 = very little of the time; 1 = none of the time.

	Activities	Actual Time	Preferred Time
1.	Helping children with language skills difficulties (e.g. reading, spelling, comprehension, etc.)	5	5
2.	Providing group assistance and instruction in a withdrawal situation	5	5
3.	Providing individual assistance and instruction in a withdrawal situation	3	3
4.	Helping children who are experiencing difficulties with mathematical skills (e.g. numeration, operations, etc.)	3	5
5.	Working with children in the regular classroom	3	3
6.	Consulting with principal, deputy principal	3	3
7.	Consulting with teacher	3	3
8.	Planning children's programs	3	4
9.	Preparing and developing new materials and programs for own use	2	3
10.	Preparing and developing new materials and programs for classroom teacher	2	3
11.	Identifying problem areas experienced by children	2	3
12.	Reporting students' progress to class teachers	2	3
13.	Consulting with other specialists (e.g. social workers, medical people) concerning students being helped	2	4
14.	Assessment to identify children needing remedial/ resource assistance	2	2
15.	Writing reports on children being helped	2	3
16.	Clerical work associated with job	2	2
18.	Attending seminars and meetings for own professional development	1½	3
19.	Conducting/participating in seminars for professional development of others	1½	2

4.8 Some indication of the distribution of the remedial/resource teacher's time spent with (a) students, (b) classroom teacher, (c) the principal, and (d) by herself has been recorded in Figure 3, below.

Figure 3: Allotment of Time by Itinerant Secondary Remedial/Resource Teacher: Central Queensland – P.C.A.P.



4.9 Both Table 3 and Figure 3 reveal that a great deal of time is spent by the teacher in the withdrawal situation. Table 3 further indicates that the teacher would like to continue to spend 'a great deal of time' in that way. O'Connor[6] sounds a warning that some resource teachers may concentrate unduly on withdrawal/remedial work. He feels that many resource teachers have used this as an initial approach to gain confidence and earn acceptance from their colleagues. Under the circumstances of a non-special education background and limited experience with newly developed skills,such an approach comes as no surprise. But the problem is that this service role will become so entrenched that the resource teacher will seldom be invited into the classrooms.

4.10 O'Connor further points out that the successful carryover into regular classrooms of the isolated remedial model has not been demonstrated in the research literature (Carroll, 1972; Cashdan and Pumphrey, 1969; Collins, 1961; Williams, 1977). Page (1979) says, 'One of the chief weaknesses of the remedial model seems to lie in the lack of co-ordination of the activities of the various personnel concerned with the education of the child. The teaching program must be designed to meet the needs of the child in the context of the general learning situation if it is to enhance his development'.[7]

Diversity of Remedial/Resource Teachers' Activities

4.11 The present remedial/resource teacher, however, does not have a narrow focus of her role nor a limited view of what should be her participation in the school's program. Apart from a high degree of interaction with students and teachers in the remediation programs, she responded to other needs as perceived by her and was flexible in approach and programming. For example, because of the limited experiential background of Year 8 students in a number of the schools she arranged inter-school activities to provide new and enriching experiences for them. In one of the smaller secondary departments she is providing a valuable in-service education program in remedial techniques for a young teacher recently appointed to the school,who was asked by the principal to assist students with learning disabilities, although she had no particular training or expertise in the area of special education. In the same school the remedial/resource teacher worked with the Year 8 English/history teacher in the preparation of a unit for presentation to the class, and prepared a special enrichment program for the same Year 8 group – 'Year 8 – This is Your Day' – when the Years 9 and 10 students were away from the school for one day. In effect, she endeavoured, as Page suggests, to co-ordinate some of the activities of various personnel concerned with the child.

4.12 During the year the services of the remedial/resource teacher were made available for the benefit of other secondary teachers in the P.C.A.P. area. At a seminar in Emerald in March she contributed a special session dealing with Readability Scales and methods of selection of suitable textbooks. At the request of the Principal of Blackwater High School, who was establishing a remedial reading program for selected students, she provided specific advice and assistance. As a result of the Blackwater visit and of discussions with the English subject master and six English expression teachers, a one-day workshop – 'What Can *We* do for Slow-Learners?' – was held. Eleven teachers, including primary remedial and resource teachers as well as secondary teachers, participated. One of the outcomes of this workshop was an arrangement for the exchange of teacher-prepared resource materials.

Support for the Resource Teacher

4.13 The administrative organisation and professional support structure for the implementation and maintenance of the itinerant service were briefly outlined in Chapter 3 (p. 9). This arrangement works well in practice and the P.C.A.P. Co-ordinator provides strong support to the teacher, as well as being the link for her with administrative and professional officers to whom the resource teacher has ready access through the telephone at any time she needs advice, information or assistance when she is in the field. The resource teacher states that she is very satisfied with the personal and professional support received. For her part she keeps the P.C.A.P. Committee informed by submitting regular written reports for each Committee meeting. At the school level principals made clerical and teacher aide help available to her.

Physical Resources

4.14 In two of the centres the accommodation provided for the resource teacher is considered adequate, but in the other two centres no permanent place is available for her use. Hence use has to be made of a withdrawal area, science room or part of the library, subject to the timetabled room usage for the day.

4.15 In all but one centre adequate additional funds were made available through the Parents and Citizens Association for the purchase of resource materials to operate the centre effectively. Of the resources in use, about 70 per cent are commercially available and the remainder were designed and developed by the teacher herself. No special funds or issues of materials and equipment or other resources were sought from P.C.A.P. or from the Secondary Education Division of the Department of Education.

4.16 In the context within which the service is operating there is need for an abundance of suitable resource material for the exceptional learner, as young, inexperienced teachers do not have their own resource material nor the knowledge of what is required. Given an abundance of resource materials the remedial/resource teacher still has to educate the inexperienced teachers about the materials and their use. This is being done.

Contact with School and Support Personnel

4.17 In considering the contacts and the frequency of such contacts that the remedial/resource teacher has with school personnel and various other support people, it must be remembered that the service had only been operating for seven months at the time of this report and was still in its developmental stages. Table 4 provides information on the contacts made by the teacher since the inception of the service, their frequency and their initiator, as well as the reason for the contact and where an increased frequency of contact is desired by the teacher.

Table 4: Contacts and their Frequency made by the Itinerant Secondary Remedial/Resource Teacher – Central Queensland – C.A.P.

Person	Frequency of Contact	Contact Initiator	Reason	Increased Contact Desired by R/RT
Principal	2/3 times per week	R/R Teacher	Provide information, discussion re aims, fundings, programs, etc.	
Class	> once a day	Sometimes Class T	Seeking advice/ assistance re student, program	
		Sometimes R/RT	Discussion re student,re programs	
Secondary Guidance Officer	2/3 times per annum	R/R Teacher	Seeking advice, re diagnosis of students	•
Other Remedial Resource Teachers	1 per annum	R/R Teacher	Exchange information Discusssion of strategies Morale coost, support	•
Regional Guidance Officer	2/3 times per annum	R/R Teacher	Discussions, referrals Use as resource person	•
Remedial Co-ordinators	2/3 times per annum	R/R Teacher	Support and resource person	•

A close contact was made with a colleague at a secondary school in Rockhampton and there was mutual aid and exchange of information, worksheets and other prepared materials.

4.18 During her seven months service so far, the remedial/resource teacher has not had contact with inspectors of schools (Special Education and/or Secondary), any medical personnel, or other helping personnel. It would seem that when the service becomes firmly established, as it will be at the end of the current school year, consideration should be given to the nature and extent of the support that is required and can be provided for this teacher, who herself is so professionally isolated while performing this essential educational service for isolated secondary students. For example, opportunity for more frequent contact with the regional guidance officer and other secondary remedial/resource teachers would be very beneficial and appreciated by her.

Itinerancy

4.19 The itinerant nature of this remedial/resource teacher service bears special comment. The schools are visited once every four weeks so there is limited contact between the resource teacher, students and classroom teachers, and the principal. Itinerancy has given the resource teacher a certain degree of independence from the schools she visits, as she cannot become involved in local issues or be hindered by local politics or conflicts of interest. Itinerancy has ensured that members of school staff become actively involved in the prescribed programs and assume some additional professional responsibility for the exceptional learner in the class, as the resource teacher prepares a three-week program for implementation during her absence. In this intervening period between successive visits, teachers on staff have the opportunity to reflect on the resource teaching role and the service, become more receptive and adapt to the changes being espoused by the remedial/resource teacher.

4.20 On the other hand the itinerant role undoubtedly reduces the effectiveness of the remedial/resource teacher because of the infrequent contact she has with each school, the time that she can give to students and teachers, and the number of schools being serviced. It reduces, too, the strong, continuing emotional support she can provide for students needing such support. To a degree the remedial/resource teacher's involvement in and contribution to the corporate life of the school are severely reduced by her itinerant role.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION OF THE SERVICE

Assumptions Underlying the Service

5.1 Implicit in the assumptions underlying the provision of the itinerant secondary remedial/resource service was the view that the secondary students attending the four schools have the right to receive any additional educational service that will contribute to the realisation of their educational potential, and minimise the effects of social isolation. It was felt that a remedial/resource teacher could provide the appropriate educational experiences, and through advice, support and assistance to teachers and parents ensure educational benefit for the students concerned.

Qualifications Regarding Findings and Evaluation

5.2 As the itinerant remedial/resource teacher service had been in operation for only seven months at the time of this report, the findings reported must be viewed in that context and be considered tentative rather than conclusive. A complete and thorough evaluation of the service remains to be undertaken. The organisational approach adopted for service delivery, however, facilitates and ensures the provision of individualised programs and learning experiences for students, and enables the resource teacher to provide assistance and support as well as information and suggested programs for the classroom teacher.

5.3 Any evaluation of this particular service is also, in effect, an evaluation of the teacher implementing the service. In this regard the present incumbent brings empathy with and for both students and teachers to her role; she is sincere and forthright and the success of the service and programs in terms of positive student performance is a reflection of her interpersonal relationships, and the establishment of a significant and valuable trust relationship with teachers and students.

Student Achievement

5.4 It was decided when the service was introduced that there should be a re-testing of students (using Gapadol) after the completion of Term 2 to determine whether or not gains had been made. At the time of this report,re-testing had not been completed for all students or at all centres. Some individuals tested showed positive gains in reading age. At one centre, for example, three students showed gains of 2 months, 9 months and 13 months respectively; while at another centre gains were 4 months, 9 months, and two students each showed gains of 18 months. A re-testing program for all students was planned for third term (1979).

Student Interest and Response

5.5 Student reaction to the programs was generally positive. At a meeting with students in two centres they themselves expressed appreciation for the help they were receiving, for the teacher's attitude to their particular difficulties, for her interest and concern, for being 'interested in what we're interested in'. Most students were motivated by the success they were achieving in the tests which are included as part of folder assignments. In one centre two teachers (home economics and manual arts) commented on an improvement in the quality of written work and in student attitude which were noticeable as the programs developed and progressed. The students at one school spoke very feelingly that the teacher 'didn't go mad, or say "You should know that", but tries to find out why you're wrong and to help'. The same students expressed sincere appreciation for lessons on applying for jobs and the simulated interviews conducted by the resource teacher. They saw these programs as very helpful and valuable practical experiences, and were more confident as a result about their chances of obtaining employment. The teacher, too, has helped to build the confidence of all the Year 8 students by well-planned inter-school visits for debates and as a result of the social interaction resulting from such visits.

5.6 The remedial/resource teacher has pointed out, however, that she has failed to 'reach' one boy with whom she worked individually. He was a Year 10 boy with a school history of attendance at a number of different schools; English was not the language spoken in the home. After working well for one month the boy did not come for any more sessions. The matter was discussed with the boy; he was encouraged to attend, but failed to respond. The teacher was unable to pursue the matter directly with parents because of the language barrier. The case has been referred to the guidance officer for assistance.

5.7 All other children who have been referred and tested are being satisfactorily catered for, and no waiting list exists.

Secondary Correspondence Students

5.8 Although it was proposed that support may also be given to other learning-disabled secondary students on correspondence on request, no such students have participated so far in the service. The remedial/resource teacher wrote to the Supervisor of the Secondary Correspondence School towards the end of the first semester, informing him of her activities and seeking the names and addresses of students in the area being serviced. These were supplied, and the extension of the service to these students was planned although it had not been implemented at the time of this report.

Other Reactions to the Service

5.9 Feedback from principals, and teachers of the four schools reflect a generally high degree of support and appreciation of the service. Some of the comments concerning the teacher and the service are reported below.

(a) *The service:*

Very worthwhile
Lessons well prepared, interesting
Children motivated by success
Children's confidence built up
Children's attitudes improved
Has changed teacher attitudes to learning disabled students
Teachers co-operating well
Well received now
Children more responsive.

(b) *The teacher:*

Interacts well with children
Approach very good, treats children normally
Instant rapport
Very comfortable in school
Very efficient
Does playground duty to see children in another role
Fits into staff naturally as if a permanent member
Has made a very worthwhile contribution.

One principal commented that more frequent visits than once every four weeks, as is now the custom, would enable a more concentrated and effective program of remediation and assistance, and would provide increased support for the classroom teacher and the student. The effectiveness of the follow-up procedures is also adversely affected by the time lapse between visits.

The same principal also expressed the view that there was a need for a more thorough and extensive preparation of the principal and his staff for the introduction of the service than that which was provided by way of the circular memorandum from the Regional Office of Education at Rockhampton.

Operational Role of the Remedial/Resource Teacher

5.10 While the role of the itinerant remedial/resource teacher was outlined in the circular to the schools when the service was being introduced, the guidelines permitted a flexibility to the needs of each of the four secondary departments and the students within the school. The teacher herself has conceptualised her role as that of advocate for exceptional learners, and a change agent within the school setting. Darveniza[9] and O'Connor[10] have commented on the change agent role of the resource teacher. O'Connor for example sees the resource teacher as, not only *support person*, but also a *change agent* and a facilitator of change, as well as a member of a team 'within the support staff area, within administration, within subject area specialties, as well as within the total school context'.[11]

5.11 These variable roles are all reflected in the operations of the itinerant remedial/resource teacher in her work within the four schools assigned to her. As a support person she has provided leadership for the young inexperienced staff members, seeing the need for teamwork and for the co-operation of the classroom teacher in implementing programs to meet students' needs. She has created an increased awareness of the problem of the exceptional child among teachers, an awareness that something can be done for slow learners and of the strategies and resources necessary for the implementation of programs that were specially devised for the individual child as well as to meet the range of learning needs found in each school. In this connection she has gained the acceptance of colleagues and has provided a valuable in-service education for teachers not only in the four schools services but also for other selected teachers in the P.C.A.P. area.

Some Issues and Concerns

5.12 **Evaluation**

Any attempt at a complete and satisfactory evaluation of the service so soon after its establishment is not possible for a number of reasons including the following:

(a) the short time (seven months) in which the service has been functioning;
(b) the teacher herself is really in her 'intern' period of service as a resource teacher and her role is evolving;
(c) the period is too short to determine accurately the effects of procedures adopted and strategies employed to meet short-term and long-term goals; and
(d) there is need for a continuing evaluation of the extent of the role of this resource teacher and how effectively both short and long-term goals are being met.

5.13 **Itinerancy**

(a) Apart from the advantages and disadvantages of the itinerant nature of the service in relation to the service itself mentioned in Chapter 4 (pp. 13–21), itinerancy presents difficulties for the teacher personally. The travelling is physically demanding and the necessity for living in motels presents other difficulties of a personal as well as professional nature.
(b) The remedial/resource teacher has had to supply her own vehicle as no official vehicle was available for the purpose. A vehicle is necessary for efficient service delivery as public transport services are unsuitable. At one meeting of the Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee the teacher presented documentary evidence indicating that the kilometrage rates paid were inadequate and that as a result she was out of pocket.
(c) There is no guarantee of continuity of employment in this position because of the pilot nature of P.C.A.P. programs. The present teacher has already submitted her resignation from the end of September (1979) to take up a permanent position as a resource teacher in a secondary school in the metropolitan area.

5.14 Timetable of Visits

The four-week cycle seems to provide too little pupil contact during the week the teacher is in the school. At the same time, if school contact time were for a fortnight at each school, the cycle would be an eight-week one and the time lapse too long between visits to each school. It would seem that a five-week cycle which would give each school four visits per semester would be more suitable as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Timetable of visits by Remedial/Resource Teacher

School Centre	Visit No. 1	Visit No. 2	Visit No. 3	Visit No. 4	Total (in weeks)
A	2 wks	1 wk	1 wk	1 wk	5
B	1 wk	2 wks	1 wk	1 wk	5
C	1 wk	1 wk	2 wks	1 wk	5
D	1 wk	1 wk	1 wk	2 wks	5
Total	5 wks	5 wks	5 wks	5 wks	20

5.15 Support for the Service

Funds for materials and resources were made available by the Parents and Citizens Association in the various centres. One centre was able to provide limited assistance only. There is need to give consideration to the provision of resource material and equipment if the service is to continue. Both special education and secondary education have experience and knowledge in this particular field.

5.16 Professional Isolation

The teacher needs more professional support as she is relatively isolated professionally – a need at its greatest, perhaps, in this her first year of service as a resource teacher. The development of further organisational and systems structures to support the resource model that was adopted is essential.

5.17 Replacement of the Remedial/Resource Teacher

The replacement of the itinerant remedial/resource teacher is vital in view of the very special contribution that was made by her in the area, the value of the service to teachers and students, and the expenditure incurred by Parents and Citizens Associations on resource materials to support the programs. Associated with replacement is the difficulty of the temporary nature of the employment that can be offered to any suitable applicant.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

6.1 While the itinerant secondary remedial/resource teacher service has only been in operation for seven months,it has been very well received by students, parents and teachers,to whom it has been valuable in providing support and assistance. A review of its operation over this period as recorded in the preceding chapters of this report reveals some aspects of the service that may receive further consideration from the Committee in the light of the recommendations made hereunder.

Evaluation

6.2 It is important that on-going evaluation should be made of the effectiveness of the service and of the interrelationship of it with other remedial/resource services and special education services available in the area. Any such evaluation could well be related to and form part of the relevant section of the general survey of support services in special education now being undertaken by the Research Branch of the Department of Education.

At the local level there should be on-going evaluation of the service in terms of structures, activities and contacts of the remedial/resource teacher, strategies employed and likely future trends and directions of the service.

The Service

6.3 (a) In view of the reception of the service and of the strong support and assistance provided by the teacher, it is recommended that the service should continue. The Central Region P.C.A.P. Committee might consider the following points:

(a) As early intervention is an important aspect of service delivery to exceptional learners,a primary itinerant remedial/resource service to those schools not now so serviced would be worthwhile. Referral, identification and assistance at the primary level should also reduce the need for assistance at the secondary level.

(b) For identification, assessment and referral the itinerant remedial/resource teacher in her final visit to each school for the year might contact Year 7 teachers and students. Not only would the class teacher be able to provide valuable information about the students, but the transition to the secondary school for some students would be made easier through having met the remedial/resource teacher.

(c) The timetable of visits was discussed in Chapter 5 (p. 26) and a suggested timetable proposed on a semester basis.

(d) Resource provision was made by the various school Parents and Citizens Associations. While the underlying philosophy for such provision by these associations is acknowledged, the implementation of a remediation program should not depend in part on the ability of a local Parents and Citizens Association to provide financial assistance for the purchase of essential materials, equipment and/or other resources.

(e) Parent Workshops conducted by the remedial/resource teacher supported by classroom teachers would be of great assistance to parents in informing them of ways in which help can be provided either formally, or informally in the home situation, and may recruit voluntary aides to assist in the reading and/or other programs at the school. Parent involvement in education is a relatively untapped resource.

(f) An official car should be provided in order to sustain the level of the present service. Such provision would obviate the need for the teacher to use her own vehicle and so avoid the payment of out-of-pocket expenses that has occurred.

The Teacher

6.4 (a) Employment conditions of P.C.A.P. personnel should be reviewed if the services provided are to be satisfactorily implemented and maintained. Insecurity of teaching tenure, which is a feature of some current positions, must affect the service provided in terms of quality and continuity.

(b) Professional development of the remedial/resource teacher and the nature and extent of professional support for the remedial/resource teacher in this very isolated role should be considered, e.g. opportunity for regular and more frequent contact with guidance and special education personnel of both systems and with primary and/or secondary remedial/resource teachers, and opportunities for in-service education.

(c) In-service education for the classroom teacher would lead to a better understanding of, and ability to identify students at risk. This development of a readiness to accept a greater responsibility for, and an ability to actively assist the exceptional learner, would be a significant contribution to the work of the remedial/resource teacher and of incalculable benefit for the students concerned.

Future Directions

6.5 That the service should continue was recommended in Chapter 6 (p. 27). The introduction of a similar service to the South-West Priority Country Area to service the three secondary departments at Surat, Injune and Mitchell would provide an additional service, as well as a support, to the primary remedial/resource teacher service already operating from St George and serving a number of feeder primary schools to these secondary departments. Such a service would merit consideration, as the problems of isolation, insularity etc. are very similar to those experienced in the secondary departments of the Central Queensland Priority Country Area being served by the existing service. It would also ensure continuing support for those children now receiving support from the primary itinerant service and who would still need it at the secondary level.

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